

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to urge you to reject petition 04-160 by the National Association of Broadcasters. This petition seeks to "prohibit SDARS providers from providing locally oriented services on nationally distributed channels."

As a current subscriber to satellite radio I appreciate, as a consumer in a free market, to have a choice of means for obtain my entertainment, news and hopefully traffic and weather. I travel by car throughout the United States for my job and satellite radio has provided an opportunity to ensure that I have access to music of my choice regardless of my location. I would like this same option for weather and traffic. If I were to travel to St. Louis, MO I would not have to search up and down both the AM and FM frequencies to find relevant traffic and/or weather. Rather, I could tune into the specified channel on my satellite radio and be informed. From a safety perspective, cell phones now have the ability to track you via GPS so if you are in need of emergency services they could locate your call. Imagine if satellite radio were able to locate it's listeners to alert them to severe weather outbreaks. For example, I am traveling through a remote part of South Dakota and listening to my satellite radio and the area I am traveling through is under a tornado warning. Satellite radio could one day send an alert to me so that I would know and could take cover. Under this current petition, I would interpret this very useful potential service as being prohibited.

I would hope that you would also agree that this could be a useful service and should not be prohibited.

Also, my understanding is that the NAB would like to keep local content delivered at the local level. This seems disingenuous since many local broadcasts are delivered from a central station that may not be local. There may be local personalities and commercials, but in the era of efficient delivery of content this is not "local" programming. As another example, many large radio station owners, will sponsor a contest; however, this contest is open to the entire family of stations owned by that broadcaster. So our "local" contestants are now competing against other contestants in cities throughout the United States. This situation seems to me as a good argument that these broadcasters are not playing by the same rules that they wish to see satellite radio play.

I believe that there is no consumer interest in preventing satellite radio from competing with traditional radio coverage of local news, weather and sports. Satellite radio has provided an opportunity to expand the number of players in local radio programming, which would give consumers like me more options. I believe competition is good in our free market society and wish to see satellite radio given the chance to compete with traditional terrestrial broadcasts and conversely traditional radio a chance to compete with satellite radio.

Sincerely,  
Jeffrey Zipfel